

Give me a break. Even if we could persuade Putin to go against his self-interest—a total impossibility, of course—such a deal would only fuel the Serbs' oft-noted passion for blaming others for misfortunes that they themselves have created. Why else would the foreigners have gotten rid of Milosevic if they hadn't somehow been responsible for him in the first place?

And what are we to make of the article's nice plan that part of the deal would be free and fair elections in Serbia under international supervision? I can just imagine what the other war criminals in the Yugoslav and Serbian governments would think of that idea!

The most likely result of an arranged Milosevic departure would be another set of gangsters, not democrats elected by universal suffrage. The Panic op-ed is entitled "Exit Milosevic." It might just as well be entitled "Enter Seselj"—that is, Vojislav Seselj, the fascist Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia. Mr. Panic's naivete gives us a pretty good clue as to why Milosevic so easily outmaneuvered him in 1993.

Morality, Serbian politics, and the Hague Tribunal aside, granting asylum to Milosevic would be a political disaster for the United States and for NATO.

Last year President Clinton had a difficult time in rounding up support within NATO's nineteen members for Operation Allied Force, and then sustaining that support until Milosevic's troops and paramilitaries were forced out of Kosovo. But he skillfully managed to do it, and alliance unity was preserved.

Then we got our European allies and others to assume 85 percent of the burden of KFOR in Kosovo and also to fund the vast majority of the cost of the Stability Pact for South East Europe.

Now, after pardoning Milosevic, I suppose we could turn to our European allies and say, "incidentally, friends, we really didn't need to fight that pesky, little air war after all. We could have just bought off old Sloba last year and sent him packing. But please don't ignore fulfilling the commitments you made to the Defense Capabilities Initiative at the Washington NATO Summit. We really do need an alliance with teeth, so you still have to spend a lot to upgrade your forces. Don't worry, though. The Milosevic buyout was just a one-time event. Nothing like that will happen again. NATO is really not in the amnesty business. It's just that the Serbs needed us to take the monkey off their back, and we're sure that Sloba's successors will now choose to cooperate with us."

Pardon my sarcasm, Mr. President, but this amnesty idea is just too politically naive to believe.

The Panic article also reveals an impatience as American as apple pie. We all want a quick fix. But, my friends,

there are few quick fixes in life that have any permanence, and trying to set the Balkans right by way of shortcuts certainly isn't one of them.

To have any chance of creating a modicum of stability in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere in the region, solutions must be largely home-grown, if under the security umbrella provided by NATO.

So, let's consign the Panic op-ed to sophomore political science seminars and think-tank luncheons—but not to serious consideration by our Government.

Let's get on with the vital, if prosaic, business of rebuilding Bosnia and Kosovo and supporting the opposition in Serbia through a variety of programs, which are in place, ongoing, and which, in time, I believe, will succeed.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it has been more than a year since the Columbine tragedy, but still this Republican Congress refuses to act on sensible gun legislation.

Since Columbine, thousands of Americans have been killed by gunfire. Until we act, Democrats in the Senate will read some of the names of those who lost their lives to gun violence in the past year, and we will continue to do so every day that the Senate is session.

In the name of those who died, we will continue this fight. Following are the names of some of the people who were killed by gunfire one year ago today, June 21, 1999.

Larry Davis, 28, St. Louis, MO; Anthony Douglas, 19, New Orleans, LA; Helen Elizabeth Foster-El, 55, Washington, DC; Izeall Hester, 41, Miami-Dade County, FL; Curtis Hill, 20, Oakland, CA; Sixto Ibarra, 17, Chicago, IL; Alex James, 20, Miami-Dade County, FL; Pedro Resendiz, 24, Kansas City, MO; Keith Siverand, 10, Houston, TX; Stefan Sure, 38, New Orleans, LA; Lung Van Lam, San Francisco, CA; Michael D. Washington, 21, Chicago, IL; Summerset Wheeler, 29, Miami-Dade County, FL; and Laran Wilson, 23, Louisville, KY.

HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT

Mr. L. CHAFEE. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate debated an issue of critical importance—preventing hate crimes. Hate crimes are attacks on our very culture. What makes the United States different from places such as the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, or the Middle East, civilizations which are torn apart by prejudice and hatred, is our acceptance of diversity. The image of the United States as a melting pot, where diversity flourishes, is shattered by news stories of hate related violence. Hate crimes are crimes of intimidation and violence, in which a person's civil rights are threatened because of prejudice.

The Hate Crimes Prevention Act, of which I am proud to be a cosponsor, does not create a new law, nor does it federalize more crimes. Rather, it clarifies a law that has been on the books for over thirty years. Federal hate crimes protections were established as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The law sets up a backstop for states that cannot adequately prosecute these hate-based crimes. However, the current law's strict dual intent requirement that the defendant acted because of the victim's race, religion, or ethnicity and because the victim was enjoying or exercising a federally protected right, such as voting or attending public school, is far too constricting. Even the heinous dragging death of James Byrd, Jr. in Jasper, Texas did not qualify under current law as a federal hate crime. Never since the statute was enacted have there been more than 10 prosecutions for hate crimes in a year.

The Smith-Kennedy amendment has two major components. First, it expands individuals covered by hate crimes to include sexual orientation, gender, and disability. Second, it eliminates constraints that make the current law ineffective. The federal government, with the approval of a state's Attorney General, would be empowered to prosecute crimes that cause death or bodily injury "because of the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, or disability" of the victim. According to FBI statistics, in 1996, almost two-thirds of the reported hate crimes were due to race, while 12% were based on sexual orientation. It is important that protection from hate crimes be extended to all of America's citizens.

The Supreme Court has already signaled the constitutionality of hate crime statutes. In Wisconsin v. Mitchell, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld the constitutional right of states to enact hate crimes statutes. I believe that it is now time for Congress to act.

Mr. President, I cosponsored the Hate Crimes Prevention Act because it was the right thing to do. The issue here is civil rights, and as a nation we went a long way in the last century toward assuring that the civil rights of ALL Americans were not infringed upon. Let's start this new century with another step in the right direction.

PLACING CHECHNYA ON THE AGENDA OF THE G-7 SUMMIT

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise today to once again draw attention to the continuing war in Chechnya and to urge the Administration to include Chechnya high on the agenda at next months G-7 summit.

Colleagues, last Wednesday I met with Mr. Il-yas AK-ma-dov who was here to present a peace proposal on behalf of the Chechen people. This peace

proposal calls for the immediate introduction of a formal cease-fire, the formation of an international commission to investigate allegations of war crimes on both sides of the conflict, and the start of political negotiations through the mediation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Mr. Ak-ma-dov relayed to me his serious concern at the desperation of the people in Chechnya, and noted that many of the recent suicide attacks we have heard about are a direct result of that desperation.

Mr. President, colleagues, we must seize every opportunity, including the upcoming G-7 summit, to continue to relay our serious concerns with the intransigence of the Russian Federation to acknowledge the concerns of the international community. The G-7 summit, which became the G-8 with the inclusion of the Russian Federation, is an association of democratic societies with advanced economies. Although Russia is not yet a liberal democracy or an advanced economy, it was invited to take part in this summit in encourage its democratic evolution. Today as I watch Russia continue to deny international human rights monitors access to Chechnya in defiance of the international community, I must question that evolution.

In February this body passed Resolution 262 which called on President Putin to allow international monitors immediate, full, and unimpeded access into and around Chechnya to report on the situation there and to investigate alleged atrocities and war crimes. In March, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly suspended the voting rights of Russia due to the large number of reports of human rights violations in Chechnya. And Mr. President, at the 56th Session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights last April, the Commission harshly criticized the Russian military's behavior in Chechnya. The Commission approved a Resolution calling on the Russian government to establish a commission of inquiry into human rights abuses in Chechnya and mandating visits to Chechnya by U.N. special envoys on torture, political killings, and violence against women. Yet, despite all this condemnation, Russia continues to ignore our requests.

The war in Chechnya from 1994-1996 left over 80,000 civilians dead. The number of deaths of innocent civilians rises daily as the current war continues. This is due not only to fighting, but to the inability of international organizations to easily distribute much needed humanitarian aid. A recent report from the U.N. High Commission on Refugees noted that elderly and sick people in the capital Grozny have difficulty reaching soup kitchens which are scattered throughout the city due to continued fighting. Russia has closed investigations into alleged human rights

abuses by Russian soldiers citing a lack of evidence, and none of the U.N. mandated special envoys to Chechnya have been given access to the area. Just three weeks ago customs officials in Moscow confiscated an Amnesty International report on human rights violations in Chechnya.

Mr. President, this body and the international community has consistently spoken out demanding the Russian government allow into Chechnya international human rights monitors. It is important that we not turn silent now.

In her address to the U.N. Human Rights Commission in March, Secretary Albright said that no nation should feel threatened by the Commission's work since its task is to support the right of people everywhere to control their own destinies, and that the Commission asks only that its members play by global rules. Mr. President, colleagues, the United States must seize the opportunity of next month's G-7 summit in Japan to once again demand that Russia play by these rules. Our leadership within the G-7 and in the international community deserves no less. The people of Chechnya deserve no less.

Mr. President, I had a chance to meet with the Foreign Minister from Chechnya last week. I promised him that, as a Senator, I would speak out on the floor about what is happening in Chechnya. Just to summarize, the Foreign Minister came here with a proposal. It is a proposal that really calls for a cease-fire, calls for a political settlement, calls for international observers to be there.

What I want to say on the floor of the Senate is that this is a brutal war. Many innocent people have been killed. Certainly, some of the Chechans are responsible for the murder of Russians; but, overall, what we have seen is a tremendous loss of life, the decimation of a country. I have sent letters to Putin. I have spoken out about this. I think it is a human rights question. I call upon our Government, in particular, to be much more actively involved in trying to bring about some resolution to this conflict.

There are entirely too many innocent people paying the price. Entirely too many innocent people are losing their lives. I think it is a role for our Government to push for some kind of a peaceful settlement. I know we need to negotiate with Putin and be in contact with the Russian Government and work with them. I am all for that. I am not at all interested in rekindling a cold war. My father is a Jewish immigrant who fled Russia. But I also believe we should not turn our gaze away from what is happening in Chechnya.

We ought to make it crystal clear to the Russian Government that the wholesale violation of human rights and torture and murder of innocent

people is simply not acceptable. The sooner there is some kind of a political settlement, the better off the people in Chechnya and Russia and the world will be. I don't believe there is any evidence at all that this military campaign is going to work. Violence begets violence. Violence is met with violence.

I think our Government can play a more positive role than we have played. For the Senate today, I call on the Secretary of State and President Clinton to be much more actively involved in trying to bring about a resolution to this conflict.

NECESSARILY ABSENT

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, last Friday I was necessarily absent from the Senate to survey recent flood damage in North Dakota. For a period of three days, rain, hail and tornadoes inundated northeast North Dakota and, sadly, four people lost their lives. My duty was to my constituents who were in the middle of another devastating natural disaster. As a result, I missed one vote Friday morning.

For the record, had I been present, I would have voted yes on adoption of the conference report to S. 761, the Electronic Signatures Act. The legislation will have an important impact on the electronic marketplace and how business is conducted via the Internet. My vote would not have changed the outcome of this vote.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, June 20, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,653,559,850,881.99 (Five trillion, six hundred fifty-three billion, five hundred fifty-nine million, eight hundred fifty thousand, eight hundred eighty-one dollars and ninety-nine cents).

Five years ago, June 20, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,895,341,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred ninety-five billion, three hundred forty-one million).

Ten years ago, June 20, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,121,083,000,000 (Three trillion, one hundred twenty-one billion, eighty-three million).

Fifteen years ago, June 20, 1985, the Federal debt stood at \$1,761,499,000,000 (One trillion, seven hundred sixty-one billion, four hundred ninety-nine million).

Twenty-five years ago, June 20, 1975, the Federal debt stood at \$525,258,000,000 (Five hundred twenty-five billion, two hundred fifty-eight million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,128,301,850,881.99 (Five trillion, one hundred twenty-eight billion, three hundred one million, eight hundred fifty thousand, eight hundred eighty-one dollars and ninety-nine cents) during the past 25 years.